

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SOE-01 AID-05
CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 H-01 INR-07
INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 USIA-06
SP-02 SS-15 STR-05 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 /102 W
-----113816 211019Z /13

R 210743Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8322
DOE ERDA WASHDC
DOE ERDA GERMANTOWN
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 10731

DEPARTMENT FOR OES/NET:RD V. ADLER
DOE (ERDA WASHDC) FOR R. WILLIT
TOKYO FOR W. HENOCH

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG, TECH, KS
SUBJECT: CHANG YE-CHUN NAMED MINISTER OF ENERGY AND RESOURCES

REF: (A) SEOUL 10556, (B) SEOUL 10668

1. EFFECTIVE 1 JANUARY 1978, CHANG YE-CHUN BECOMES MINISTER OF NEWLY ESTABLISHED, REFTEL A, MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND RESOURCES (MER). CHANG IS A VETERAN MINISTERIAL-LEVEL ADMINISTRATOR KNOWN FOR TENACITY AND FORTHRIGHT ACTION. HIS SWITCH FROM PRESTIGIOUS POST OF MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY IS VIEWED MORE AS A MATTER OF POLITICAL CAUTION ON THE PART OF PRESIDENT CONCERNING INITIATION OF MER ACTIVITIES RATHER THAN INDICATION OF ANY SHORTCOMINGS IN CHANG'S DIRECTION OF MCI WHICH ACHIEVED EXPORT TARGET OF \$10 BILLION UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP.

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2. RESPONSIBILITY FOR POLITICALLY SENSITIVE MATTER OF DELAY IN COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS OF KO-RI UNIT 1 MOVES WITH CHANG FROM MCI TO MER. KO-RI UNIT 1 COMMERCIAL OPERATION DEMONSTRATION AND SELECTION OF REACTOR MANUFACTURE FOR KO-RI UNITS 3 AND 4 DURING SIX MONTH PERIOD BEFORE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, WHICH ENTAILS DESIGNATION OF NEW CABINET, ARE APPROPRIATE MATTERS FOR A MINISTER OF CHANGS

EXPERIENCE AND STATURE. MARSHALLING GOVERNMENT BACKING OF MAJOR INVESTMENTS IN CAPITAL INTENSIVE ENERGY PROJECTS WHICH YIELD LONG TERM RETURNS, I.E., FOSTERING GENERATION OF ELECTRICAL POWER WITH IMPORTED URANIUM AND BITUMINOUS COAL, WILL TEST HIS ABILITIES BECAUSE YOUNGER FELLOW CABINET MEMBERS HAVE BUILT THEIR CAREERS BY SUPPORTING INVESTMENTS WHICH YIELD NEAR TERM RETURNS.

3. IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT THE KOREA DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE, REFTEL B, AND MR. SONG PANG-YONG, CHAIRMAN OF PRESIDENT PARK'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY RESOURCES ARE CURRENTLY THE STRONGEST PROPONENTS FOR IMPORTATION OF COAL TO EASE PREDICTED ENERGY SHORTAGES IN THE 2000'S.
SNEIDER

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Message Attributes

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